

REMARKS

Claims 3 and 11 are amended by incorporating the feature that the first layer and the second layer have different curing properties. The basis for this amendment can be found, for example, on page 7, lines 15-17 of the originally-filed specification.

New claims 23 and 24 are added. The basis for the new claims can be found, for example on page 100, lines 6-9; and page 109, lines 3-6 of the originally-filed specification.

Claims 7 and 15 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Upon entry the Amendment, claims 3, 4, 6, 8-14, and 16-24 will be all of the claims pending in the application. No new matter is added.

Claims 3, 4 and 6-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Oshima et al. (EP 1 176 467). The Examiner argued that elements with two photosensitive layers are disclosed by the disclosure of "at least one photosensitive layer" in Oshima et al., and that Oshima et al. discloses the same formula (I) binder as recited in the instant claims for photosensitive layers which would be located in all of the photosensitive layers, i.e. first and second photosensitive layers.

Applicants respectfully traverse. Oshima et al. does not explicitly disclose a photosensitive layer having a two-layer structure, and moreover neither discloses nor suggests the feature introduced in claims 3 and 11 that the first layer and the second layer have different curing properties. Therefore, the planographic printing plate precursor of the present invention has an image recording layer having a multiple-layer structure including two or more layers that have different curing properties, which is neither taught nor suggested by Oshima et al.

Furthermore, attention should be drawn to the unexpected and superior results obtained as a result of the photosensitive layer having a two-layer structure as described at page 5, last line to page 6, line 18 of the specification. Specifically, at an exposed area, since the second layer is located in the vicinity of the exposed surface and since the first layer serves as a heat-insulating layer to prevent heat diffusion to the support, the curing reaction progresses efficiently, thereby making it possible to form an image area having high strength. Furthermore, at an unexposed area, the second layer is uncured, and the first layer that is successively exposed is mainly composed of the binder polymer. Therefore, the image recording layer as a whole has a predetermined high developing rate, and it is possible to easily remove the image recording layer at the unexposed area by an alkaline developer to prevent generation of stains due to residual films at the non-image area, which leads to high-quality images that have superior image discrimination. These superior results attained by the photo-sensitive layer having a two-layer structure are not disclosed or suggested by Oshima et al.

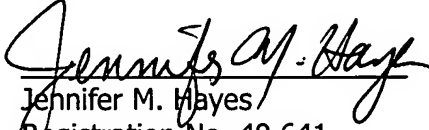
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. 10/671,776

ATTY DKT Q77307

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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